

UNITED NATIONS



OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



BIOGRAPHY

Louise Arbour

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Louise Arbour was appointed High Commissioner for Human Rights by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly, effective 1 July 2004.

Ms. Arbour, a Canadian national, began a distinguished academic career in 1970, culminating in the positions of Associate Professor and Associate Dean at the Osgood Hall Law School of York University in Toronto, Canada, in 1987. In December of 1987, she was appointed to the Supreme Court of Ontario (High Court of Justice) and in 1990 she was appointed to the Court of Appeal for Ontario. In 1995, Ms. Arbour was appointed by Order-in-Council as single Commissioner to conduct an inquiry into certain events at the Prisons for Women in Kingston, Ontario.

In 1996, she was appointed by the Security Council of the United Nations as Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda. After three years as Prosecutor, she resigned to take up an appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Ms. Arbour graduated from College Regina Assumpta, Montreal in 1967 and completed an LL.L (with distinction) from the Faculty of Law, University of Montreal in 1970. Following the Quebec Bar Admission Course, she was called to the Quebec Bar in 1971 and the Ontario Bar in 1977. Ms. Arbour has received honorary doctorates from twenty-seven Universities and numerous medals and awards. She is a member of many distinguished professional societies and organizations and has served on the boards of many others. She has published extensively on criminal law and given innumerable addresses on both national and international criminal law.

Louise Arbour was born on 10 February 1947 in Montreal, Quebec and has three children. She is fluent in French and English.

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